

'Etheldreda House'
ELY, Cambs.

21st April, 1945.

To The Chairman & Members,
Ely Urban District Council.

Madam and Gentlemen,

I regret the delay in presenting, as Medical Officer of Health, my report for 1943.

It will be remembered that my predecessor resigned on the 31st March, 1943. My appointment was not approved until mid-August of the same year despite the fact that I had already been approached by your Clerk during March. During the 4½ months interval there was no Medical Officer of Health for the Urban District, and statistical returns only were kept by the Clerk. I must emphasise that from the months of April to mid-August the Urban District Council had no local Medical Officer of Health on its staff.

The delay was not of my making and was, I am given to understand, due to the apparent slowness of higher authority in sanctioning my appointment. When I did take up the appointment I found no records of any work done during the first quarter of the year. I formally and most definitely disclaim responsibility for any statistics, or their absence, or any work done or not done prior to August, 1943.

I occupied the remaining months of this year by picking up the many loose threads I found, and at the same time doing such routine work of an urgent nature which presented itself.

In view of my remarks above, I think it will be clear that I have insufficient facts and figures on which to base a Public Health Report for the Urban District of Ely during this year. I propose, therefore, to confine myself to noting a few reasonably outstanding facts relating to the latter part of the year of which I have personal knowledge. This method will effect also an economy in paper.

1. Infectious Diseases.

The returns show no abnormal features, apart from an epidemic of measles occurring during the last 3 months of the year. This reached its peak during the middle fortnight of October. Fortunately, the type of case was mild and there were few complications. Doubtless the unsuitable school buildings in Ely, on which I have commented in the past, are factors which should be taken into account when considering this epidemic. Out of 84 cases, 53 cases were in the 5 - 10 age group.

I must draw your attention to one point which may or may not be significant. During the first 23 days of October 44 cases of measles were notified, the peak week being the week ending 23.10.43, when 17 cases were notified. There was then a very sharp decline and up to the end of the year there were only two weeks (27.11.43 8 cases; 11.12.43. - 9 cases) when more than 3 cases a week were received. The Market Street Infants' School was closed for three weeks on 12.10.43. I am more than ever convinced of the desirability of closing schools, especially Infants' Schools, during an epidemic of Infectious Disease.

2. Influenza Epidemic.

In December, 1943, there was an outbreak of typical influenza. This was quite sharp while it lasted, but fortunately the end of the month saw a definite and lasting decrease in the number of cases.

3. Tuberculosis.

Notifications of new cases received under the Tuberculosis Regulations, 1930, were as follows:-

| <u>Age.</u> | <u>Respiratory.</u> | | <u>Non-Respiratory.</u> | |
|--------------|---------------------|-----------|-------------------------|-----------|
| | <u>M.</u> | <u>F.</u> | <u>M.</u> | <u>F.</u> |
| 0 - | - | - | - | - |
| 1 - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 - | - | - | - | - |
| 15 - | - | - | - | - |
| 25 - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 35 - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 45 - | - | - | - | - |
| 55 - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 65 and over. | - | - | - | - |

This shows a decrease of 5 cases on the preceding year.

4. Diphtheria Immunization.

The following is a summary of children who completed the full course of diphtheria immunization during the year:-

| | | |
|----------|----|---------------------------|
| Under 5. | 32 | 51.62% of the population. |
| 5 - 15. | 87 | 92.03% of the population. |

These figures probably do not reflect absolutely accurately the true state of affairs, as possibly children immunized by private practitioners, and attending schools outside the Educational Authority area, are not all included. In any case, I have great satisfaction in submitting these figures, because on the one hand, as Medical Officer to the Isolation Hospital, I am fully convinced of the efficacy of immunization in modifying an attack of diphtheria; whilst, on the other hand, my work as a private practitioner leads me to the profound conclusion that immunization does minimize the chance a child has of contracting this disease.

5. Miscellaneous.

i. In December, 1943, the Clinic at Tower House specially for the treatment of scabies was closed, as it was felt that the small number of cases coming up for treatment did not warrant the comparatively high cost of maintaining the clinic.

ii. Housing. In company with the Surveyor, I carried out inspections of a number of houses.

iii. Cowsheds and Milk. As in 1939 and preceding years when I had the honour of being your Medical Officer, I found that the general standard of cleanliness of cowsheds left much to be desired.

(Sgd.) K.S. MAURICE-SMITH,

Medical Officer of Health,
Ely Urban District Council.